

Nigeria and SA: opportunity beckons

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The most important aspects of nation branding is ensuring consistency in the marketing initiatives and a visible presence in order to keep the brand top-of-the-mind of the targeted audience.



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I have observed with interest in the recent past that Brand South Africa has undertaken a number of initiatives aimed at developing and managing South Africa's reputation in my country and the rest of the continent.

I have had a pleasure of engaging with them in 2014 (as an interviewee for their Africa Perceptions Study); 2015 (as a discussant in the Roundtable Dialogue entitled, towards agenda 2063: The ties that bind us); and this year in a bilateral session with their chief marketing officer, Linda Magapatona-Sangaret.

My interaction with the Brand SA team led by their CMO is a practical example of consistency and visibility. I have observed commitment of the team in communicating a clear message that South Africa is an integral part of the continent. Our discussions on Monday were a follow-up on the previous engagements in order to craft a way forward that will strengthen collaboration between the two African economic giants.

My field of expertise (the film industry) is one of the platforms that are readily available to tell a positive narrative about our beloved continent.

I believe that we need to tell this narrative first, to ourselves as Africans in order to get to know each other better and appreciate our differences as strengths that each of us can tap into at any given moment; then share with the world our

story from our own perspective through film and any other form of creative arts.

This form of marketing communication will influence the perceptions that we have about one another as the continent.

We have a common history and heritage, for example, we still need to tell the common narrative about Africa's role in supporting the initiatives that dismantled the shackles of apartheid in South Africa.

To undertake such initiatives requires resolute leadership. It is for this reason that I assert that Nigeria and South Africa need to lead the continent to attain its greatness.

Therefore, Brand South Africa's initiatives, not only in Nigeria but also to the continent, are commendable efforts to drive Africa's competitiveness.

As we journey towards the centenary since the formation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU), we need to emphasise more on our commonalities as we build the 'Brand Africa' that we all want to see by 2063.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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